

MEMORANDUM

December 8, 2011

TO: Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee

FROM: Glenn Orlin, ⁶⁰Deputy Council Staff Director

SUBJECT: Proposed MARC train schedule

On December 1 the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) announced its intent to revise MARC commuter rail service on the Brunswick Line, effective January 30, 2012. The proposal has two components. One component would take an afternoon train that currently terminates in Brunswick and extend it to Martinsburg, West Virginia, and would start a morning train in Martinsburg that currently starts in Brunswick. The second component would have a few trains bypass certain stations in Montgomery County with the intent of providing more reliable service.

The latter component has raised concerns among some of MARC's patrons. John Hovatter, MTA's Director of the Office of MARC Train and Commuter Bus Operations, will present the rationale for these changes. The goal for this worksession is to develop a Council position which can be shared with the Secretary of Transportation in the next week, before she makes a final decision as to whether or not to proceed with the proposed schedule changes.

As background, attached are:

MTA's December 1, 2011 release	©1-3
MTA's proposed Brunswick Line schedule	©4
Current Brunswick Line schedule	©5
Chart summarizing existing and proposed station stops	©6
Letter from Miriam Schoenbaum, Member MARC Riders Advisory Council	©7

MARC Brunswick Line Schedule Change Proposal

Date:

Thursday, December 1, 2011

The Brunswick Line schedule has not seen a significant revision since the Frederick Branch opened in 2001. In the intervening years, ridership on the Brunswick Line has increased significantly, especially at Brunswick, Point of Rocks, Germantown and Gaithersburg. The current schedule does not reflect the time needed to load passengers at stations.

In revising the schedule, we have worked closely with CSX Transportation, the owner of the Brunswick Line, to ensure that the proposed changes are feasible and represent current operational conditions. CSX and MARC management rode Brunswick Line trains for several days earlier this year and meticulously documented the run time between stations and dwell time at each station. This information was incorporated into the proposed schedule.

[Click here to download a copy](#) of the proposed Brunswick Line schedule. Please note that Amtrak trains P029 and P030 are included in this document as information only. They do not accept MARC tickets. More information on Amtrak's Capitol Limited is [available by clicking here](#)

The proposed Brunswick Line schedule provides several enhancements to the service:

- Better spacing between trains—by adjusting schedules, there will be fewer instances where a train must slow to follow the train that preceded it. This, along with additional service to West Virginia (see below) will also address overcrowding on current trains.
- Instead of the last train to Martinsburg returning to Brunswick each night without passengers (a non-revenue move), Train 872 will originate in Martinsburg, departing at 5:00am. Trains 874 and 878 will continue to operate from Martinsburg.
- Train 873 will be extended to Martinsburg, providing a much-requested earlier departure (3:30pm from Union Station) that goes all the way to West Virginia.
- More limited-stop trains for West Virginia, Brunswick, and Point of Rocks passengers.

Other service changes:

- Stopping patterns for smaller stations will be adjusted, primarily to address spacing between trains (as discussed above).
- The last departure from Union Station to West Virginia will be Train 881, which will depart at 6:15pm and operate as a limited-stops train. Train 883 (7:15pm departure from Union Station) will terminate in Brunswick.

- While not related to the schedule change, MARC is in the process of installing three new crossovers on the Brunswick Line. These will permit trains to change tracks more frequently to operate around slow or disabled freight trains. The crossover near Twinbrook Metrorail station is in service, another west of Barnesville will be in service soon, and a third crossover is under construction just east of Germantown.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why is the Brunswick Line schedule being changed?

A. Please read the detailed explanation above.

Q. Are fares being increased?

A. No.

Q. What is the effective date for the new schedule?

A. Our target implementation date is January 30, 2012.

Q. The train I ride now no longer stops at my station. Why did you remove the stop?

A. Our goal with this schedule change is to increase reliability and overall speed of the service. By adjusting the stopping patterns of the trains, we will be able to provide a more reliable service and reduce the instances that trains must slow down to follow another MARC Train. Some smaller stations will have one or two fewer departures—again, the goal is to improve the operational flow of trains.

Q. I am a West Virginia passenger that rides Train 883 and I am not happy that it will no longer operate west of Brunswick. Why are you doing this?

A. Terminating Train 883 in Brunswick addresses several operational problems and will improve the reliability of service by ensuring that the operating crew gets its full Federal Railroad Administration-mandated time off between shifts. In many cases, when Train 883 is delayed, the crew cannot work the next day and CSX must find a replacement crew, which is not always available. Also, by revising the patterns of train service to West Virginia, we were able to add an additional, earlier, morning departure out of Martinsburg. To compensate for Train 883 ending in Brunswick, the time of the last departure to Martinsburg from Union Station will be 6:15pm. It will also be a limited-stops train, which will reduce travel time.

Q. How can I provide feedback about the new schedule?

A. There are several ways to provide feedback. You may fill out an online survey or download and print a feedback form. **We strongly encourage passengers to use the online survey**, as it will collect all data electronically and allow MARC management to best evaluate customer feedback. In addition, we are taking this opportunity to collect some demographic and ridership information about our patrons. Emails are always welcome at marc@mta.maryland.gov.

In addition, there will be several Meet the MARC Management events over the next two months. Representatives from MARC, the MTA, and CSX Transportation, will be present at stations all along the Brunswick Line to take customer feedback. The schedule for these events is:

December 5 – Rockville MARC station, 4:00-6:30pm
December 7 - Silver Spring MARC station, 3:30-6:15pm
December 8 – Monocacy MARC station, 5:00-8:00pm
December 13 – Washington Union Station, 4:00-7:00pm
December 14 - Brunswick MARC station, 5:00-7:30pm
December 15 – MARC Riders Advisory Council meeting, 4:30-6:00pm, Hall of States, 444
North Capitol Street, Washington DC
December 20 – Germantown MARC station, 4:00-7:00pm<
January 3 - Brunswick Town Hall Meeting, VFW Hall in Brunswick, 5:00-8:00pm
January 4 - Barnesville MARC station, 4:30-7:00pm
January 5 - Kensington Town Hall Meeting, Kensington Town Hall, 4:00-7:00pm
Saturday, January 7 - West Virginia (location TBD in Charlestown), 1:00-4:00pm

Brunswick Line Schedule Proposal

DRAFT ONLY

EASTBOUND

Train Number	P870	P890	P872	P874	P892	P876	P878	P894	P880	P030	884
	S/Q	Q	Q	S/Q	S/Q	Q	S/Q	S/Q	S/Q	S/Q	
Martinsburg, WV.			5:00	5:25			6:25			10:30	
Duffields			5:16	5:41			6:41				
Harpers Ferry			5:25	5:50			6:50			10:55	
Brunswick	5:00		5:40	6:05		6:40	7:05		7:40		15:30
Frederick		5:05			6:05			7:10			
Monocacy		5:11			6:11			7:16			
Point Of Rocks	5:10		5:50	6:15		6:50	7:15		7:50	Amtrak's	
Dickerson		5:37			6:37				7:57	Capitol	
Barnesville	5:21		6:01			7:01		7:45	8:03	Limited	Dead
Boys		5:46			6:45				8:09	Does	Head
Germantown	5:30	5:53	6:11	6:34	6:52	7:11	7:34	7:55	8:15	Not	Friday
Metropolitan Grove		5:58		6:40	6:58	7:17	7:40	8:01	8:21	Honor	Only
Gaithersburg	5:40	6:04	6:21	6:46	7:04	7:23	7:46	8:07	8:27	MARC	
Washington Grove			6:24		7:07			8:10	8:30	Tix	
Rockville	5:49	6:12	6:31	6:56	7:16	7:31	7:56	8:17	8:38	11:40	
Garrett Park		6:19			L 7:22			L 8:24	L 8:44		
Kensington	L 5:58		L 6:38		L 7:26			L 8:29	L 8:49		
Silver Spring	L 6:07	L 6:30	L 6:48	L 7:11	L 7:35	L 7:46	L 8:11	L 8:38	L 8:58		
QN Tower (CP Point)	6:14	6:37	6:55	7:18	7:42	7:53	8:18	8:45	9:05	12:30	
Washington, DC.	6:26	6:49	7:07	7:30	7:54	8:05	8:30	8:57	9:17	12:40	16:40

WESTBOUND



Train Number	P871	P873	P891	P029	P875	P877	P893	P879	P881	P895	P883
	S/Q	Q	S/Q		S/Q	Q	Q	S/Q	S/Q	S/Q	Q
Washington	13:40	15:30	15:45	16:05	16:25	16:55	17:10	17:40	18:15	18:35	19:15
QN Tower (CP Point)	13:46	15:36	15:51	16:10	16:31	17:01	17:16	17:46	18:21	18:41	19:21
Silver Spring	13:53	15:44	16:01		16:41	17:09	17:24	17:54	18:29	18:48	19:28
Kensington	13:58	15:51			16:46		17:30	18:00		18:54	19:33
Garrett Park	F 14:02		16:09				17:34	18:04			F 19:36
Rockville	14:09	15:59	16:16	16:29	16:56	17:23	17:43	18:13	18:41	19:02	19:43
Washington Grove	F 14:15		16:22	Amtrak's			17:51	18:19		D 19:08	D 19:49
Gaithersburg	14:19	16:05	16:26	Capitol	17:03		17:54	18:24		19:11	19:53
Metropolitan Grove	F 14:22	16:09	16:30	Limited	17:07		17:58	18:28	18:49		19:57
Germantown	14:28	16:19	16:37	Does	17:14		18:06	18:35	18:56	19:20	20:02
Boys	F 14:33		F 16:41	Not			D 18:11	D 18:40			D 20:06
Barnesville	F 14:41	L 16:25		Honor	L 17:27		L 18:19	L 18:48	D 19:05	D 19:30	D 20:13
Dickerson	F 14:46		F 16:49	MARC			D 18:25	D 18:54			D 20:17
Point Of Rocks	L 14:59	L 16:39		Tix	L 17:44	L 17:54		L 19:03	L 19:19		L 20:25
Monocacy			L 17:18				L 18:54			L 20:01	
Frederick			17:28				19:05			20:10	
Brunswick	15:14	L 16:55			17:58	L 18:10		19:17	L 19:35		20:40
Harpers Ferry		L 17:07		17:16		L 18:22			L 19:47		
Duffields	Friday	L 17:18				L 18:35			L 19:59		
Martinsburg, WV.	Only	17:38		17:45		18:55			20:19		

E-mail MARC at marc@mta.maryland.gov with any comments or concerns about this proposal.

EXISTING SCHEDULE

Effective 1/19/10

BRUNSWICK LINE EASTBOUND Monday through Friday only

TRAIN NUMBER		P870	P890	P872	P874	P892	P876	P878	P894	P880
City/AM-PM	AR/DP	S/Q AM	Q AM	Q AM	S/Q AM	S/Q AM	Q AM	S/Q AM	S/Q AM	S/Q AM
Martinsburg, WV &	DP				5:25			6:30		
Duffields	DP				5:41			6:46		
Harpers Ferry, WV	DP				5:51			6:56		
Brunswick, MD &	DP	5:00		5:38	6:02		6:33	7:07		7:40
Frederick &	DP		5:12			6:05			7:10	
Monocacy &	DP		5:18			6:11			7:16	
Point of Rocks &	DP	5:10		5:48	6:13		6:43	7:17		7:50
Dickerson	DP		5:43				6:51			7:58
Barnesville	DP	5:21		5:58		6:39	6:55		7:44	8:03
Boyd's	DP		5:51				7:02			8:09
Germantown &	DP	5:30	5:56	6:08	6:33	6:49	7:07	7:36	7:54	8:14
Metropolitan Grove	DP	5:35	6:01	6:13	6:39	6:55	7:13	7:42	8:00	8:20
Gaithersburg &	DP	5:41	6:06	6:18	6:43	7:01	7:19	7:47	8:06	8:26
Washington Grove	DP			6:21			7:22			8:29
Rockville &	DP	5:49	6:13	6:26	6:52	7:08	7:28	7:58	8:13	8:34
Garrett Park	DP	5:54				7:13	7:33			8:40
Kensington	DP	5:58		6:33		7:17	7:38		8:21	8:44
Silver Spring &	DP	L6:06	L6:27	L6:42	L7:08	L7:27	L7:47	L8:14	L8:29	L8:54
Washington Union Station &	AR	6:25	6:45	7:00	7:28	7:45	8:05	8:30	8:47	9:12

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MARC SCHEDULES, FARES AND OTHER SERVICES, CALL 1-800-325-RAIL.

TTY Information 1-410-539-3497








www.mt Maryland.com

Train Status: www.marctracker.com

- f Flag stop at this station: trains will pick up passengers standing on platform, and visible to engineer. Trains will discharge passengers at this station if passengers have notified conductor upon boarding.
 - d Train will stop to discharge passengers only. Passengers must notify conductor upon boarding. Train may leave ahead of scheduled departure time when passengers have been discharged.
 - L Train receives and discharges passengers at this station. Train may leave this station up to five minutes in advance of scheduled departure time.
 - S ONLY trains designated with an S at the top of the column will operate when severe weather conditions or special circumstances warrant. On days of heavy snowfall or other severe weather, MARC will operate this special schedule. Train 875 will operate to Martinsburg only on days that the S schedule is in effect. Train 871 will also operate under the S schedule. Stops marked with an S will also be made when this service is in effect.
 - Q Trains operating with a "Quiet Car". No cell phones, electronic devices, or loud conversations. Quiet Car is adjacent to locomotive.
- Meet-the-MARC Bus Service connects Frederick and Point of Rocks to this train. For schedule and route information call 301-694-2065. These buses will stop at the Frederick or Monocacy stations upon request to the driver after buses have completed their normal afternoon route.



BRUNSWICK LINE WESTBOUND Monday through Friday only

TRAIN NUMBER		* P871	P873	P891	P875	P877	P893	P879	P881	P895	P883
City/AM-PM	AR/DP	S/Q PM	Q PM	S/Q PM	S/Q PM	Q PM	Q PM	S/Q PM	S/Q PM	S/Q PM	Q PM
Washington Union Station &	DP	1:45	3:35	3:50	4:25	4:55	5:15	5:40	6:00	6:30	7:15
Silver Spring &	DP	1:58	3:48	4:03	4:38	5:09	5:29	5:54	6:13	6:43	7:28
Kensington	DP	2:03	3:53		4:44		5:35	5:59	6:19	6:49	7:33
Garrett Park	DP	2:06	3:56				5:39	6:03	6:23	6:53	7:37
Rockville &	DP	2:12	4:02	4:15	4:53	5:21	5:44	6:09	6:28	6:58	7:42
Washington Grove	DP	2:16	4:06		S		5:48	S	6:34	d7:04	d7:47
Gaithersburg &	DP	2:19	4:09	4:21	5:00		5:51	6:15	6:37	7:07	7:49
Metropolitan Grove	DP	2:23	4:13	4:25	5:04		5:55	6:19	6:41	7:11	7:53
Germantown &	DP	2:27	4:17	4:30	5:09		6:01	6:25	6:47	7:15	7:57
Boyd's	DP	d2:33	d4:23		S		d6:08	S	d6:53		d8:03
Barnesville	DP	d2:40	L4:30		L5:21		L6:15	L6:36	d7:00	d7:27	d8:09
Dickerson	DP	d2:44	L4:34		S		d6:20	S	d7:05		d8:14
Point of Rocks &	DP	L2:55	L4:45		L5:35	L5:49		L6:50	L7:13		L8:22
Monocacy &	DP			L5:14			L6:50			L7:59	
Frederick &	DP			5:22			6:58			8:07	
Brunswick, MD &	DP	3:08	5:03		5:55	L6:05		L7:03	7:29		L8:32
Harpers Ferry, WV	DP				S	L6:16		L7:14			L8:42
Duffields	DP				S	L6:29		L7:27			L8:55
Martinsburg, WV &	AR				S	6:50		7:46			9:14

* Train P871 operates Friday only

MARC one-way, weekly and monthly tickets from Frederick and Monocacy to points between Germantown and Washington are honored on MTA Bus Route 991 from Monocacy to Shady Grove.

There will be no MARC train service on New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day (observed), Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

MARC Train Service is operated under contract with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and CSX Transportation. Neither the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), Amtrak, nor CSX Transportation assume responsibility for inconvenience or damages resulting from missed stops, canceled or delayed trains, failures to make connections, or shortages of equipment.

Station	AM Current	AM Proposed	PM Current	PM Proposed
Martinsburg, WV	2	3	3	4
Duffields, WV	2	3	3	3
Harpers Ferry, WV	2	3	3	4
Brunswick	6	6	6	6
Frederick	3	3	3	3
Monocacy	3	3	3	3
Point of Rocks	6	6	6	6
Dickerson	3	3	4	4
Barnesville	6	5	7	7
Boys	3	3	4	3
Germantown	9	9	8	7
Metropolitan Grove	9	7	8	7
Gaithersburg	9	9	8	7
Washington Grove	3	4	5	5
Rockville	9	9	9	9
Garrett Park	4	4	6	4
Kensington	6	5	7	6
Silver Spring	9	9	9	9

Stations and times where and when service would either be reduced or increased are shown in **bold**. This chart shows MARC train service only, not AMTRAK.

Dear County Councilmembers,

I wanted to make sure that you knew about the problems with the new MARC Brunswick Line schedule that MARC announced last week and plans to put into effect on January 30. I am hoping that you will contact MDOT Secretary Beverly Swaim-Staley to ask her to delay implementation of the new schedule, if not to withdraw it altogether. I am also hoping that you will be able to come to the "town hall" meeting that MARC is holding instead of a public hearing, at the Kensington Town Hall on January 5, from 4 pm to 7 pm.

MARC is a vital part of Montgomery County's transportation. Unfortunately, the new MARC schedule worsens service for most of Montgomery County's stations. And, despite MARC's assurances, it is unlikely to reduce delays.

In Montgomery County, Metropolitan Grove will lose three trains. Because Metropolitan Grove has a lot of unused parking capacity, the county government has been suggesting this station as an alternative to Germantown, where the parking lots are full. It's also a station where people get off to go to work, for example at NIST. And it's the future transfer point between the CCT and MARC.

Gaithersburg will lose one train, which MARC has converted to a limited-stop train to shorten the trip to Martinsburg, West Virginia. This loss of service will result in a gap of 55 minutes between trains for Gaithersburg, during the evening rush. Gaithersburg's loss of service is especially surprising given that MARC's stated reason for putting together a new schedule is to account for the increased passenger loading times at Montgomery County's biggest origin stations, Germantown and Gaithersburg. And Gaithersburg is also a station where people get off to go to work.

In addition, Kensington (another station where people get off to go to work) will lose two trains. Garrett Park will lose two trains. Barnesville will lose a train. Washington Grove will gain a train, but also lose a train that currently has a lot of riders. Since all of these stations already have limited service, the loss of one or two trains will have a big impact on ridership. And Dickerson, Boyds, and Garrett Park will have gaps of one and a half hours between trains.

Finally, unfortunately for all MARC riders, the new schedule is unlikely to increase reliability and reduce delays. The main causes of delays are related to CSX (track work, signal problems, freight train congestion, mechanical problems) and the weather (reduced speeds due to heat or flood warnings). The current schedule doesn't cause these problems, and the new schedule won't fix them.

Please help Montgomery County's MARC riders by stopping MARC from putting its new Brunswick Line schedule into effect.

Miriam Schoenbaum
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